

DEPENDENCE AND DOMINANCE IN ALCOHOLICS  
AND THEIR WIVES

By

JUDITH MILLER GOE

Bachelor of Arts  
Edinboro State College  
Edinboro, Pennsylvania  
1966

Master of Education  
Edinboro State College  
Edinboro, Pennsylvania  
1969

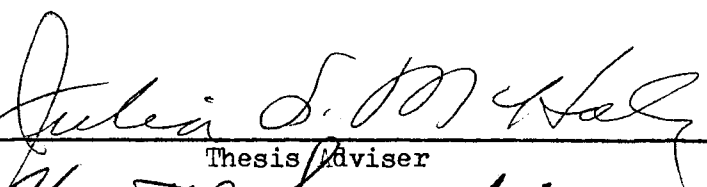
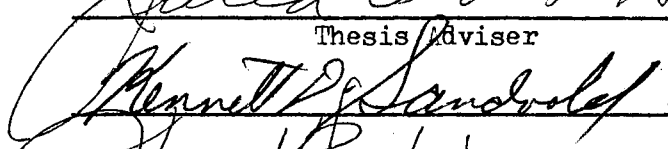
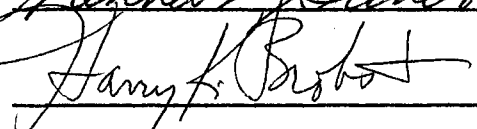
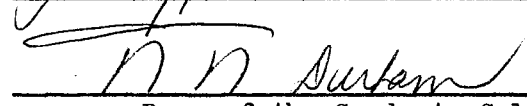
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Thesis Approved:

  
Thesis Adviser  
  
  
  
Dean of the Graduate College

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are presently perhaps six million alcoholics in the United States (Efron & Keller, 1966). Most of these alcoholics are male. Of these male alcoholics, many have been married or are married, and some of them have been serially married. The problem of the male alcoholic and his wife, their personality characteristics, and their relationship has intrigued behavioral scientists essentially since the beginning of the study of the science of behavior.

The theories which are now current regarding alcoholics seem to have their roots in early psychoanalysis, since the early writers (Abraham, 1908; Rado, 1926; and Freud, 1930), stressed the importance of alcohol as a disinhibitor of repressed impulses and as a facilitator for the expression of dependency needs. Rado (1926) suggested that certain individuals become addicted to alcohol to escape tension and to recapture the dependent role of infancy. He felt that alcohol addiction could be a result of any kind of neurotic conflict, alcohol merely being the agent of tension reduction. Another early theorist, Knight (1937, 1938) agreed with Rado concerning the correlation of alcoholism with different types of neurotic conflicts. He differed, however, in believing that there are some discernible reasons why certain persons become alcohol addicted rather than developing other kinds of neurotic or psychotic patterns. He investigated the alcoholic's family of origin

in search of these reasons and discovered a pattern of overprotective and overindulgent mothers, with these behaviors on the part of the mothers originating in rejection or overreaction against hostility toward the child. According to Knight, the fathers of alcoholics were unaffectionate and inconsistent in their behavior, unpredictably being alternately unconcerned and harsh in their treatment of their children, and providing inadequate male role models for their sons.

K. A. Menninger (1938) essentially agreed with Knight's theory regarding the etiology of alcoholism and the significance of the dependency conflicts in the personality of the alcoholic. He extended the conceptualization of the alcoholic to include a suicidal flight from an intolerable unconscious conflict stemming from the alcoholic's fear of losing and at the same time wishing to destroy his love objects. He considers alcohol addiction:

... a form of self-destruction used to avert a greater self-destruction, deriving from elements of aggressiveness excited by thwarting, ungratified eroticism, and the feeling of a need for punishment from a sense of guilt related to the aggressiveness (p. 161).

These contributions of Knight and Menninger contain the major psychoanalytic bases upon which are formed the current accepted conceptualizations of the psychodynamics of alcohol addiction. Whether one follows analytic streams of thought or learning theory, it is generally assumed that the family of origin and early environmental setting of the individual predispose that individual to certain kinds of adult behaviors. Thus a pattern is established for the individual's adult relationships, including marriage. The mismanagement of early dependency relationships remain the focii of most of the theories regarding the psychodynamics of the alcoholic.



Adler (1938, 1941) supports the primacy of unresolved dependency needs and internal conflicts in the etiology of alcoholism, and contends that alcoholism is the result of childhood indulgence. He also suggests that feelings of inferiority are at the root of alcoholism, as well as other emotional problems, and that the individual has a need for superiority, whether or not it is expressed overtly.

Another theorist, Blane (1968) states that:

Details of formulations vary and language differs, but dependency and inner struggles with it form the background of much of what has been said about the alcoholic (p. 33).

Lisansky (1960) proposes that alcoholics may suffer from inadequate ego defense mechanisms as well as dependency needs, but that the array of defense mechanisms, e.g. repression, are not strong enough for the alcoholic whose dependency needs are stronger than those of other individuals. She proposes that the alcoholic has developed the following traits:

- (a) an intensely strong need, drive, impulse toward dependency; (b) weak and inadequate defense mechanisms against this excessive need, leading to, under certain conditions, (c) an intense dependence-independence conflict; there is also (d) a low degree of frustration or tension tolerance; and (e) unresolved love-hate ambivalences (pp. 332-333).

The dominating theoretical view in the early literature has been supported by much of the more recent research and theorizing among behavioral scientists. Substantially, the view of the alcoholic as a person with a dependency conflict or one who has unmet dependency needs remains the most popularly supported viewpoint. Much of this theorizing states that the alcoholic's craving for alcohol is correlated with a craving for all-giving maternal love and care, whether or not causation is postulated.

According to R. W. White:

There is a repressed but still active craving for loving maternal care. There is also a very strong aggressive need, suppressed by circumstances to the extent that it comes to expression only in verbal form. Alcohol does a lot for these two needs .... it permits him to gratify his dependent cravings without forcing his consciousness to become aware of them (White, quoted in McCord & McCord, 1960, p. 35).

Sanford (1968) states that in some alcoholics, "an underlying dependence with overcompensatory strivings for 'maleness' is an important predisposing factor" (p. 15).

In research work with boys who later became alcoholics, Jones (1965, 1967) and McCord & McCord (1960) independently concluded, using both projective and nonprojective material at several ages during childhood and in adulthood, that specific personality factors and family patterns characterize many alcoholics during childhood and adolescence as well as in adulthood. That is, these factors are found to pre-exist addiction to alcohol. These studies agree that the families of origin were either indifferent or alternated between indulgence and excessive affection and rejection. Additionally, these families were lacking in warmth and security, and were families in which conflicts played a major role. McCord and McCord concluded that the lack of consistency and ensuing anxiety results in an unresolved dependency need and frantic efforts to achieve independence.

"Tahkå", based on extensive clinical studies of Finnish alcoholics, concludes that the "infantilizing attitudes of their mothers and their insufficient identification with a paternal person" causes the alcoholic to be involved in a struggle for independence which is doomed to failure [Tahkå, 1966, p. 222, (cited in McClelland, Davis, Kalin and Wanner, 1972).]

Other researchers found evidence that the frequency of drunkenness is related to "deprivation of dependency needs in infancy, childhood and adulthood and to strong demands for self-reliance, achievement and responsibility" (Bacon, Barry & Child, 1965, p. 45).

Therefore, in research as well as theory, it appears that the general opinion of the alcoholic is that he is a person who has strong dependency needs which have not, and possibly cannot, be met.

There have been attempts to delineate characteristics which commonly appear in alcoholics, although there is no general agreement that there is an "alcoholic personality," per se. For example, the following characteristics are attributed to alcoholics by Clinebell (1956):

- (1) high level of anxiety in interpersonal relations; (2) emotional immaturity; (3) ambivalence toward authority; (4) low frustration tolerance; (5) grandiosity; (6) low self-esteem; (7) feeling of isolation; (8) perfectionism; (9) guilt; (10) compulsiveness; (11) angry over-dependency; (12) sex role confusion; (13) inability to express angry feelings adequately (cited in Pittman, 1967, p. 38).

Blane (1970) points out that there are "certain personality characteristics, traits and consistent patterns of behavior that occur commonly among alcoholics" (p. 16) but notes that these traits are not present in all alcoholics, and that some of the traits are common in persons who are not alcoholic. He lists the following personality characteristics as most commonly observed among alcoholics:

- (1) low frustration tolerance; (2) sociability; (3) feelings of inferiority combined with attitudes of superiority; (4) fearfulness, i.e. the alcoholic is fearful of testing himself or his capabilities; (5) dependency (pp. 17-22).

Although "dependency" is commonly attributed to the alcoholic and is frequently seen as the most salient characteristic of his personality, it has rarely been defined, and is often viewed as a hypothetical entity, not directly observable or measurable. Blane, for example, defines

dependency as:

... an underlying-need state and as a directly observable behavior that is not in itself a central factor in alcoholism. While dependency as a need state is closely related to dependency as an observable behavior, it is best thought of as an idea, a mental construction, not generally amenable to direct observation (Blane, 1968, p. 15).

The present study accepts the psychoanalytic interpretation of the causative factors related to dependency and agrees that dependency is more a hypothetical construct than a directly observable or operationally definable term.

However, according to Lemert (1962) dependency can be defined in terms of interpersonal relations:

Dependency can be defined or inferred from types of interpersonal interactions within the conjugal family and between the conjugal and parental families. The interactions have to do with dominance, economic provision and self-sufficiency, and mutual claims on affection. More specifically, the referents of dependency are to be sought in the locus or division of family authority, decision-making, child discipline, source of financial support, and the sharing of time, attention and overt affection by family members (Lemert, 1962, p. 592).

Lemert breaks down dependency into three main attributes, (1) wife dominance of the family; (2) economic dependency; and (3) deviant affectional relations as perceived by the wives of alcoholics, who were the informant-subjects in his study of 116 families. He found 26.9 percent wife-dominant families, 24.1 percent husband-dominant, and 47.5 percent egalitarian relationships in the experimental subjects. He concluded that "dependency" was found in no more than two-fifths of the cases. He suggests that "among the stresses leading to alcoholism an important one for some cases may be ... 'independency conflict'" (p. 596).

Lemert's definition of dependency is in close conjunction with the definition of dependency which is employed in the present study. Since

research must be based on some operationally definable observable, for the purposes of this study, "dependency" will be defined according to definition of what is measured on the "Control" scale of the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation - Behavior (FIRO-B) instrument:

The interpersonal need for control is defined behaviorally as the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relation with people with respect to control and power. 'Satisfactory relation' includes (1) a psychologically comfortable relation with people somewhere on a dimension ranging from controlling all the behavior of other people to not controlling any behavior of others and (2) a psychologically comfortable relation with people with respect to eliciting behavior from them somewhere on a dimension ranging from always being controlled by them to never being controlled by them.

With regard to feelings, the need for control is defined as the need to establish and maintain a feeling of mutual respect for the competence and responsibility of others. This feeling includes (1) being able to respect others to a satisfactory degree and (2) having others respect the self to a satisfactory degree.

The need for control, defined at the level of perceiving the self, is the need to feel that one is a competent, responsible person (Schutz, 1970, pp. 19-20).

In this context of "dependency," the alcoholic's scores on the FIRO-B should place him, if he is a "dependent person," in the classificatory category on the Control scale which is described by the following statement: "I want others to control and influence me. I want other people to tell me what to do" (Schutz, 1967, p. 5).

After beginning this research, the author learned through personal communication with Dr. Leo R. Ryan that a study utilizing the FIRO-B instrument with alcoholics has been done previously. Dr. Ryan was kind enough to share this unpublished research on male alcoholics (Walter, Ryan and Webber, 1972) wherein the FIRO-B was utilized in an evaluation of 90 male veterans admitted to the Alcoholic Treatment Unit at the Mountain Home Veterans Administration Center in Tennessee. It was discovered that the research findings of Walter, Ryan and Webber were essentially in agreement with the pilot efforts of this author in regard

to male veterans in the Alcohol Treatment Program at the Oklahoma City Veterans Administration Hospital.

Walter, et al. sought to find distinguishing traits within the personality structure of the alcoholic, concentrating on dependency. These researchers disagree with the concept that dependency is the "central or cardinal trait of the alcoholic" (Walter, Ryan & Webber, 1972, p. 2). They insist that other traits are confused with or combined with "dependency" and call for a re-evaluation of the concept of dependency. They state that:

Most people ... picture a 'dependent' person as one who not only avoids and abdicates decisions and responsibility, but demands that others assume all responsibility for the management of his dependency needs. Through the dependent's eyes, the management of his dependency needs is not his problem, but yours. This is a popular picture that many have when they think of the alcoholic (p. 3).

The findings of the above researchers indicate that only 17 percent of the alcoholics in their experimental group tested with the FIRO-B fit the above description, what is termed an openly dependent person, one who has abdicated responsibility for the management of his needs. They note that "the most pronounced trait found ... was a high need for affection," with 67 percent of the subjects revealing this need and "a marked inability to obtain it" (p. 3). Returning to the Control dimension, 24 percent of the subjects fell into the classificatory category denoted "The Rebel," whose attitude toward control is one of "you stay off my back and I'll stay off yours " This is a defensive stance, which protects the individual against exposing his basic doubt about his adequacy, particularly in regard to new areas of responsibility. Old areas of responsibility do not threaten the rebel, but he must go his own pace in new areas because of his fear of exposure.

Twenty-two percent of the subjects fell into the classificatory category denoted "The Checker," who also has considerable self doubt. The primary characteristic of this person in dealing with others is to obtain reassurance from others before he takes on responsibility or makes a decision. "The Loyal Lieutenant" profile described 6 percent of the subjects. This person typically is a more careful sort of checker, one who will assume responsibility only when directed by someone else.

Seventeen percent of the subjects were classified as "Matchers." The matcher is willing to assume responsibility and make decisions, but needs a compatriot to share the responsibility with him, to work "shoulder to shoulder" with him. Four percent of the subjects tested revealed traits of the Dependent-independent conflict, i.e. the counterdependent person. Seven percent revealed no evidence of dependency and were apparently confident in assuming responsibility and in making decisions. Two percent of the subjects were classified in the category labelled "Mission Impossible," which describes individuals who compulsively assume responsibility beyond their capacities, i.e. attempt to control everything and everyone.

It will be noted that the most frequent category on the Control dimension of the FIRO-B scale in the above study is that of "The Rebel." The second most frequently found profile was "The Checker," while there were equal numbers of "Openly Dependent" persons and "Matchers."

These researchers note that in social situations the alcoholic subjects varied from one extreme of gregariousness to the other extreme of "loners," with 31 percent to be found in each of the extreme categories. Twenty-six percent were superficially gregarious, but actually quite selective in regard to with whom they socialized to any extent. Another 8 percent of the subjects were blocked or inhibited in social skills.

Four percent revealed themselves to be "moderate" in their social behavior. These researchers note that the alcoholics they tested "typically go to extremes in their socialization" (p. 6). They are most explicit in stating that, "if one single trait had to be selected from gaining insight into the alcoholic, the present study points not to dependency but rather to affection" (p. 6).

The present research project differs from that of Walter et al. in that it includes in the study the wives of alcoholics. Certain stereotypes exist concerning the wives of alcoholics as well as stereotypes of the alcoholic. Additionally, a kind of neurotic complementarity is often postulated as the basis for marriage of male alcoholics to non-alcoholics. The alcoholics are typically seen as "dependent," while their wives are typically seen as "dominant."

For example, studies often depict the marital relationship of an alcoholic male as characterized by an interactive pattern of a dependent and inadequate male "henpecked" by a dominating woman, who is often seen to maintain her own adequacy only at the expense of her husband (Boggs, 1944; Futterman, 1953; Bailey, 1961; Bailey, Haberman & Alksne, 1962).

Contrary to the view that the wife of the alcoholic male is a "dominant" person is the view that she is herself "dependent" (Lewis, 1954; Bullock & Mudd, 1958; Kogin & Jackson, 1959; and Hunter, 1963).

These contradictory theories and research findings lead to the same question regarding the wives of alcoholics which concerned us regarding the male alcoholics, i.e. are there particular personality patterns or traits associated with the women who marry alcoholics?

According to one review of research and literature, the course of the interest in alcoholics and their wives has had a specific progression:



The literature reveals a progression from initial consideration of the wife chiefly as a part of the alcoholic patient's environment, to a concern about her as a person in her own right, and finally to a current focus on the interaction between marital partners (Bailey, 1961, p. 84).

Theories have been proposed that there is not one particular type of woman who is representative of the wife of the alcoholic, but several. Studying case histories, four types of wives of alcoholics were described by Vallet, Deschamps, Beauseigneur, & Leviet (1965): (1) the resolute; (2) the passive-resigned; (3) the self-sacrificing; and (4) those who were very different either socially, ethically or intellectually from their husbands.

Another social scientist reports four types of wives of alcoholics, failing to describe what method she used for designating these types. She states that:

... each individual has a dominating characteristic which is the nucleus of his personality. It is this dominating characteristic which governs his selection of a marriage partner (Whalen, 1953, pp. 633-634).

Whalen classifies the wives of alcoholics into the following four categories, according to how she sees the "dominating characteristic:" (1) the sufferer; (2) the controller; (3) the waverer; and (4) the punisher.

The research of a more objective nature does not attempt to classify the wives of alcoholics into such discreet categories. In fact, the findings have been consistent in indicating that there is no basis for the assumption that there is a typical characteristic or set of characteristics which define or typify the wife of an alcoholic. For example, in an MMPI study of 50 wives of alcoholics and a control group of 50 wives of non-alcoholics, only half of the experimental group showed evidence of personality disturbance; the type of

disturbance was found to be highly variable, and the wives of alcoholics were not distinguishable from controls in regards to personality types. Additionally, no specific pattern of personality disfunction could be identified as characteristic of these experimental subjects (Kogan, Fordyce and Jackson, 1963).

These researchers feel that there is evidence that "women of various personality types are married to alcoholics of various personality types" (p. 235). Further, they suggest that, "it would be more meaningful for research on alcoholism and the family if the particular constellations of personality pairs became the focus of attention" (p. 235).

#### Summary of Clinical and Experimental Literature

In summary, the foregoing theoretical propositions, clinical and experimental findings suggest that there is probably no single alcoholic personality nor a single personality type who becomes the wife of an alcoholic. It may be that there are, however, definable and discoverable personality factors which render some individuals more likely than others to become an alcoholic or the wife of an alcoholic.

The review of literature demonstrates that most theorists are in agreement that dependency needs and related inner conflicts may be at least central in the etiology of alcoholism.

There is some disagreement among the theorists and experimenters as to whether dominance or dependency is most characteristic of the wives of alcoholics.

## CHAPTER II

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was suggested that research on "the particular constellations of personality pairs" (Kogan, Fordyce and Jackson, 1963, p. 235) become a focus of attention. This is an area which appears to have been neglected, and which may hold some meaningful information concerning alcoholics and their wives, their personalities, and their relationships to each other. The present pilot study proposes to explore one of the avenues which may be open to investigation.

Through personal observation in groups of (1) alcoholics, (2) wives of alcoholics, and (3) couples, the husband being alcoholic, at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where the experimenter worked as a Clinical Psychology Trainee in the Alcohol Treatment Program, two tentative hypotheses evolved: (1) that these alcoholic husbands and their wives are more alike than different from each other, and (2) neither of the pair appears to be either dependent nor controlling, i.e. dominant, in his relationship with the other.

The researcher decided to utilize the FIRO-B instrument, specifically examining the Control scales, in an effort to discover whether these alcoholics and their wives were, in fact, more similar than different in the "Control" area. The FIRO-B was chosen because of its direct measure of "control," and because it is a rapidly executed and scored, non-threatening method of discovering how one relates to others.

It was specifically hypothesized that:

(1) alcoholics and their wives (in this specified population) are neither dependent nor dominant as defined above;

(2) alcoholics and their wives (in this specified population) tend to be more like each other than they are different.

Since this is basically an exploratory research project, or "pilot study," it was decided that all areas represented on the FIRO-B instrument, i.e. Inclusion, Control, and Affection, would be compared. This decision was made particularly in light of the findings of Dr. Leo Ryan and his co-workers, i.e. alcoholics do not generally fall into the Control category of "dependent," and that the scores of alcoholics in the Affection area were meaningful in their experiment.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Subjects

Subjects were 14 hospitalized male alcoholic veterans and their (14) wives who attended a weekly "Couples Group" at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma during June and July 1972. The male subjects were voluntary patients in a 90-day inpatient psychotherapeutic program specifically for alcoholism. These male subjects are considered representative of only that select group of male alcoholics who seek treatment in such a program as that described above. The ages ranged from 38 to 64 years.

The 14 female subjects were the wives of the above alcoholics. They represent a particularly select group in that they actively participated in a "Couples Group," a psychotherapeutic group which met once weekly. These female subjects are considered representative of only such a select group of wives of alcoholics who voluntarily participate in such group therapy. The ages of the female subjects ranged from 30 to 60 years.

#### Material

The test instrument utilized in this experiment was the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation - Behavior (FIRO-B). It is a scale which has as its intent to determine "a measure of a person's

characteristic behavior toward other people in the areas of inclusion, control and affection" (Schutz, 1967, p. 3). It is additionally an instrument that will facilitate the prediction of interaction between people, e.g. compatibility.

The fundamental interpersonal dimensions include Inclusion (I), Control (C), and Affection (A), and are behaviorally defined as follows:

I. The interpersonal need for inclusion is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with people with respect to interaction and association. Some terms that connote various aspects of a relationship that is primarily positive inclusion are 'associate, interact, mingle, communicate, belong, companion, comrade, attend to, member, togetherness, join, extravert, pay attention to, interested, encounter.' Negative inclusion is connoted by 'exclude, isolate, outsider, outcast, lonely, detached, withdrawn, abandon, ignore.'

C. The interpersonal need for control is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with people with respect to control and power. Control behavior refers to the decision-making process between people. Some terms that connote aspects of primarily positive control are, 'power, authority, dominance, influence, control, ruler, superior, officer, leader.' Aspects of negative control are connoted by 'rebellion, resistance, follower, anarchy, submissive, henpecked, milquetoast.'

A. The interpersonal need for affection is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with others with respect to love and affection. Some terms that connote aspects of primarily positive affection are 'love, like, emotionally close, personal, intimate, friend, sweetheart.' Aspects of negative affection are connoted by 'hate, cool, dislike, emotionally distant, rejecting.' (Schutz, 1967, pp. 4-5).

Two aspects of behavior in each dimension are assessed:

the behavior an individual expresses toward others (e) and the behavior he wants others to express toward him (w) (Schutz, 1967, p. 4).

The FIRO-B scales have been tested for reliability on "about one thousand subjects and the reproducibility computed for the remainder of the sample" (Schutz, 1967, p. 5). The mean coefficient of the six scales for stability in a test-retest situation is .76. In the

test-retest study for reliability on each of the six scores, 70 percent of the highs and lows remained in the same category on the retest, while 50 percent of the middles retained their middle status. The probability of jumping from a high to a low or vice versa is about 10 percent (Schutz, 1967).

The FIRO-B scales were tested for correlation between scales with a sample of 1340 subjects. Results showed significant correlation between e and w for Inclusion and Affection and between I and A. Although it is obvious that the FIRO-B contains nonindependent scales, it is noted that the scales for the Control area were not significantly correlated with either I or A or between e and w in the sample studied.

Content validity is assumed for the FIRO-B scales since they are Guttman scales. Studies have been done and are in progress examining the concurrent validity of the FIRO-B scales. It is felt by the originators of the FIRO-B that it would be inappropriate to make general norms for the FIRO-B.

The FIRO-B instrument is reproduced in Appendix A. An individual can score between 0 and 9 in each of six score areas: Ie (Inclusion - expressed), Iw (Inclusion - wanted), Ce (Control - expressed), Cw (Control - wanted), Ae (Affection - expressed), and Aw (Affection - wanted). The 0, 1 and 2 scores indicate avoidance, and may be considered low scores. The 7, 8, and 9 indicate a compulsive quality toward, and may be considered high scores. The 3, 4, 5 and 6 scores are the middle range of scores, indicating neither compulsive avoidance or moving toward.

Scores on the FIRO-B are completely interpretable only in patterns of the six scores, although one may isolate pairs of Inclusion, Control,

or Affection scores for examination. In the area of Control, for example, a high Ce score and a low Cw score suggests "dominance," while a low Ce and a high Cw suggests "dependence." Low scores on both Ce and Cw are typical of "The Rebel" profile, described above, while high scores on both Ce and Cw are typical of the "Mission Impossible" profile. Scores in the middle range in various combinations typify the other profiles previously described.

#### Experimental Procedure

The following verbal instructions were given to all subjects at the end of their first session in the "Couples Group." The specific times when each couple received the test instrument and instructions varied, since the group was on-going and couples joined and left at unspecified intervals.

This is a test which shows how you relate to other people. It is called the FIRO-B. I am doing research on how people relate to each other and would appreciate it if you would take 10 or 15 minutes to fill it out. No one but you will know the results of this test. If you want feedback on how you relate to other people, you can make an appointment with me and we will go over it together.

#### Dependent Variables

In order to test the hypotheses that, in this specified population, (1) alcoholics and their wives are neither dependent nor dominant; and (2) alcoholics and their wives tend to be more like each other than they are different, scores on the Control area, i.e. Ce and Cw are considered the Dependent Variables. The two scores, Ce and Cw are interpreted as a pair.

Although no specific hypotheses have been made regarding the Inclusion and Affection scales, these areas were analyzed as well.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

It was decided that the most appropriate experimental design would employ a two-tailed t-test for related samples. It was felt that the robustness of the t-test would be sufficient to allow for generalization to the specified like population, i.e. other hospitalized alcoholic veterans and their wives who were self-selected according to the previously stated criteria. The t-test for related samples was employed because these husbands and wives constitute "naturally related" pairs. A second reason for choosing the t-test was that, although it is questionable whether the FIRO-B scales can be considered interval scales, much meaningful data may often be found using a parametric test with ordinal data, assuming that the researcher keeps in mind the limitations of his findings.

A significance level of .01 was chosen since the researcher wishes to be cautious considering the implications of running multiple t-tests, while still allowing for considerations of the experimental nature of this "pilot study."

The data were analyzed to determine whether the alcoholics and their wives were from the same or different populations in regard to the Control scale of the FIRO-B, in order to support or reject the stated hypotheses that: (1) alcoholics and their wives (in this specified population) are neither dependent nor dominant as defined above; and (2) alcoholics and their wives (in this specified population) tend to be more like each other

than they are different.

Although no specific hypotheses were made regarding the Inclusion and Affection scales, these scales were also analyzed for descriptive purposes.

Table I contains the values of  $t$  for the matched pairs of alcoholics and wives on the FIRO-B scales. It may be seen from Table I that the two-tailed  $t$ -tests for these related pairs failed to reach significance at the .01 level of confidence not only in the Control area, but also in the Inclusion and Affection areas. In fact, the only  $t$ -test performed which reached significance was the Ae (Affection-expressed) comparison, which reached significance at the .20 level of confidence. This data tends to support the hypothesis that alcoholics and their wives tend to be more like each other than they are different, and suggests that these two experimental groups are from the same population in regard to the Control scale of the FIRO-B.

The data also tend to support the first hypothesis, that alcoholics and their wives are neither dependent nor dominant. Table II contains Group Means of FIRO-B scores for Alcoholics and Wives, and it may be seen that both experimental groups fall into the same or closely related categories on all scales of the FIRO-B, i.e. "Low" (0, 1, 2) or in the lower limits of the "Middle" category (4, 5, 6). No mean scores for either group fall into a "High" (7, 8, 9) category. Also refer to Table III where it can be seen that the Medians and Modes are also very closely correlated in the data, i.e. no median or mode for any score falls into a "High" category.

It also may be noted that the means, medians and modes do not differ more than one scale score within each experimental group, e.g. the Ce

TABLE I  
t-TESTS FOR COMPARING MATCHED PAIRS  
OF ALCOHOLICS AND WIVES ON  
FIRO-B SCALES

Scale	Value of t
Ie	-.9251
Iw	.7662
Ce	.3921
Cw	.1506
Ae	1.1447
Aw	.9429

$P < .01$  (two-tailed) = 3.01

df = 13

TABLE II

GROUP MEANS OF FIRO-B SCORES  
FOR ALCOHOLICS AND WIVES

	Inclusion		Control		Affection	
	A	W	A	W	A	W
e	2.357	2.929	1.214	0.000	3.071	2.357
w	2.286	1.429	3.500	3.357	5.214	4.429


A = Alcoholics


W = Wives

TABLE III  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF FIRO-B SCORES

Score	Scales											
	Ie		Iw		Ce		Cw		Ae		Aw	
	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W
9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
7	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
6	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	4
5	0	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	6
4	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	1
3	5	3	0	2	4	1	3	2	4	5	1	1
2	4	1	1	0	2	2	2	4	5	3	0	0
1	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	1
0	1	2	7	9	7	8	1	0	0	1	0	1
Range of Scores	0-7	0-6	0-9	0-7	0-3	0-5	0-8	1-9	1-8	0-5	1-9	0-6

A = Alcoholic  
W = Wife

 = Mode

 = Median (rounded to 7.0)

and Cw mean scores for Alcoholics are 1 and 3 respectively, while the median and mode scores on these scales are 0 and 3. The mean score for Wives for Ce and Cw are 0 and 3 respectively, while the median and mode scores are 0 and 2. Considering that N = 14 for each group, this consistency is considered worthy of remark.

The data tends to support the hypothesis that alcoholics and their wives are neither "dependent" nor "dominant" as defined above; both experimental groups have either "Low" or the lowest of the "Middle" scores on the Control area of the FIRO-B, i.e. the highest scores for both groups, whether one refers to the mean, median or mode as representative of central tendency is 3.

Additionally, examination of this descriptive data tends to further support the hypothesis that alcoholics and their wives tend to be more like each other than they are different, i.e. the greatest difference between the experimental groups in the Control area, as well as in the Inclusion and Affection areas is 1.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The experimenter has examined the FIRO-B scale scores for each experimental group as if the mean, median and mode scores were representative of one person, so that the following interpretations of these scores describes the hypothetical "average alcoholic" and "average wife" from the specified population.

ALCOHOLIC			WIFE				
	I	C	A		I	C	A
e	2-3	0-1	2-3	e	3-4	0	2-3
w	0-2	3	5	w	0-1	2-3	4-5

The "average alcoholic" in this population may be described as follows:

Inclusion: He tends to be an "Exclusive Clubber," i.e. a "loner," detached or withdrawn in casual relationships. He is not a socializer and is cautious in his selection of companions, limiting his associations to a few members of his select group of associates.

Control: He tends to be a "Rebel," i.e. his attitude is one of "you stay off my back, and I'll stay off yours." He is hesitant to take on new areas of responsibility, and will become "mulish" if pressed to take on responsibility before he is ready to do so. He might prefer to "check out" his decision with another person before he takes control or responsibility, but will essentially move at his own pace, regardless of what others suggest or advise. If he is a particularly immature person, he may refuse to take on responsibility in many areas.

Affection: He tends to be a "cautious lover," i.e. he wants and needs affection, but does not express this need until he feels safe in doing so.

The "average wife" may be described as follows:

Inclusion: She tends to be an "Exclusive Clubber." Although she may appear to be sociable, she actually wants an even more carefully selected group of associates than her husband. She tends to be a "loner."

Control: She tends to be a "Rebel."

Affection: She tends to be a "Cautious Lover."

It may be seen that, in agreement with the findings of Walter, Ryan & Webber (1972), the alcoholics in the population presently under study do not fall into the "dependent" category, and additionally, there is reason to believe that their wives cannot be categorized as either dependent nor dominant. To the contrary, both experimental groups fit into the profile usually described as "The Rebel." How the persons who are classified as "Rebels" handle responsibility depends upon their level of maturity. If the "Rebel" is a person of low maturity, he possibly does not have any old areas of responsibility, so that all areas of responsibility and control are new, thus constituting a threat to his security. He may rebel very quickly if he is expected to take responsibility, and even become "a rebel without a cause." He probably experiences much difficulty with authority figures and may be concerned about his masculinity. He might conceivably attempt to present an image of masculinity through engaging in "masculine" activities, e.g. sports. A "Rebel" who is mature is more inclined to be anxious only about new areas of responsibility and to have confidence in himself in old areas of responsibility. He is much less likely to become rebellious when pushed, and probably is not particularly concerned about his masculinity.

Findings from the present study support the hypotheses that: (1) alcoholics and their wives (in the specified population) are neither dependent nor dominant, and (2) alcoholics and their wives (in the specified population) tend to be more like each other than they are different.

The present study is seen to have limitations in the following areas:

(1) the definition of dependency utilized in this study is not actually



comparable to the definitions used in many of the studies reviewed; (2) no control groups were utilized; (3) the sample of subjects was insufficient, particularly in regard to making generalizations about the population; and (4) a parametric statistical test was employed with data which is believed to be on an ordinal scale.

However, this pilot study has served the purpose of exploring a new avenue of research and it is felt that the results, limited as denoted above, indicate that this may be a fertile area for further research. The experimenter, based on the results of this experiment, plans to utilize the FIRO-B in a future research project and hopes to follow up this study with a similar project, using control groups and other groups of alcoholics and their wives, e.g. selected from community agency groups or Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon groups.

Another study suggested by these results is a similar investigation of drug addicts and their wives, perhaps comparing such experimental groups with alcoholic-wife groups and a control group of couples in group therapy, the husband being neither alcoholic nor drug-addicted.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY

The majority of theorists on alcoholism are in agreement that dependency needs play a central role in the etiology of alcoholism. Theorists disagree as to whether the wives of alcoholics are most aptly described as dependent or dominant. In most of the literature reviewed, the alcoholic and his wife are seen to be conflicted persons, whether or not their conflicts are limited to dependency needs. No accurately consistent profile of the alcoholic or his wife across the literature was discovered, and definitions of dependency were seen to be inconsistent.

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the proposal that alcoholics and their wives are not, in the specified population, either dependent or dominant according to what is measured on the Control scale of the FIRO-B, and to observe whether alcoholics and their wives tend to be more alike than they are different concerning control. It was found that alcoholics and wives in the specified population are neither dependent nor dominant, but tend to be "rebels" in their control relationships with others. It was also found that they tend to be cautious in establishing relationships, either casual or close. Considering the limitations of this study, it would appear that alcoholics and their wives in the population examined are not different from each other, i.e. that they are from the same population.

Further research has been suggested and methods suggested to improve upon the experimental design.

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## APPENDIX A

### RAW DATA

Pair No.	Scales											
	Ie		Iw		Ce		Cw		Ae		Aw	
	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W	A	W
1	2	3	5	0	2	3	5	4	1	0	4	0
2	1	1	0	7	3	2	8	1	2	2	1	6
3	3	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	3	3	5	1
4	3	3	5	1	0	0	7	2	2	2	7	3
5	1	3	5	3	0	0	2	4	5	3	3	6
6	3	4	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	5	5
7	2	4	0	0	0	5	0	3	3	1	5	5
8	2	6	0	0	0	1	4	2	2	5	6	5
9	3	2	5	0	0	0	1	1	6	1	9	4
10	1	4	9	0	1	2	4	1	2	4	6	5
11	2	6	0	3	3	0	3	9	2	3	1	5
12	3	1	2	0	3	0	6	6	8	3	7	6
13	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	3	1	5	5
14	7	4	1	6	3	1	1	2	1	2	9	6

A = Alcoholics

W = Wives

APPENDIX B

FIRO-B INSTRUMENT



# FIRO-B

WILLIAM C. SCHUTZ, Ph.D

**DIRECTIONS:** This questionnaire is designed to explore the typical ways you interact with people. There are, of course, no right or wrong answers; each person has his own ways of behaving.

Sometimes people are tempted to answer questions like these in terms of what they think a person *should* do. This is *not* what is wanted here. We would like to know how you *actually* behave.

Some items may seem similar to others. However, each item is different so please answer each one without regard to the others. There is no time limit, but do not debate long over any item.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

MALE \_\_\_\_\_ FEMALE \_\_\_\_\_

	I	C	A
e			
w			



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**577 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306**

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For each statement below, decide which of the following answers best applies to you. Place the number of the answer in the box at the left of the statement. Please be as honest as you can.

1. usually      2. often      3. sometimes      4. occasionally      5. rarely      6. never

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. I try to be with people.  | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. I try to include other people in my plans.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. I let other people decide what to do.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. I let other people control my actions.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I join social groups.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. I try to have people around me.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. I try to have close relationships with people.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. I try to get close and personal with people.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. I tend to join social organizations when I have an opportunity. | <input type="checkbox"/> 13. When people are doing things together I tend to join them. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. I let other people strongly influence my actions.               | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. I am easily led by people.                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. I try to be included in informal social activities.             | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. I try to avoid being alone.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. I try to have close, personal relationships with people.        | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. I try to participate in group activities.                  |

For each of the next group of statements, choose one of the following answers:

1. most people      2. many people      3. some people      4. a few people      5. one or two people      6. nobody

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17. I try to be friendly to people.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 23. I try to get close and personal with people.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18. I let other people decide what to do.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. I let other people control my actions.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19. My personal relations with people are cool and distant. | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. I act cool and distant with people.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20. I let other people take charge of things.               | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. I am easily led by people.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21. I try to have close relationships with people.          | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. I try to have close, personal relationships with people. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22. I let other people strongly influence my actions.       |   |

For each of the next group of statements, choose one of the following answers:

1. most people      2. many people      3. some people      4. a few people      5. one or two people      6. nobody

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 28. I like people to invite me to things.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 35. I like people to act cool and distant toward me.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 29. I like people to act close and personal with me.        | <input type="checkbox"/> 36. I try to have other people do things the way I want them done. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30. I try to influence strongly other people's actions.     | <input type="checkbox"/> 37. I like people to ask me to participate in their discussions.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31. I like people to invite me to join in their activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> 38. I like people to act friendly toward me.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 32. I like people to act close toward me.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 39. I like people to invite me to participate in their activities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 33. I try to take charge of things when I am with people.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 40. I like people to act distant toward me.                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 34. I like people to include me in their activities.        |   |

For each of the next group of statements, choose one of the following answers:

1. usually      2. often      3. sometimes      4. occasionally      5. rarely      6. never

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41. I try to be the dominant person when I am with people. | <input type="checkbox"/> 48. I like people to include me in their activities.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 42. I like people to invite me to things.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 49. I like people to act close and personal with me.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 43. I like people to act close toward me.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 50. I try to take charge of things when I'm with people.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 44. I try to have other people do things I want done.      | <input type="checkbox"/> 51. I like people to invite me to participate in their activities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45. I like people to invite me to join their activities.   | <input type="checkbox"/> 52. I like people to act distant toward me.                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 46. I like people to act cool and distant toward me.       | <input type="checkbox"/> 53. I try to have other people do things the way I want them done. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 47. I try to influence strongly other people's actions.    | <input type="checkbox"/> 54. I take charge of things when I'm with people.                  |
-

VITA *J*

Judith Miller Goe

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: DEPENDENCE AND DOMINANCE IN ALCOHOLICS AND THEIR WIVES

Major Field: Psychology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, July 14, 1935.

Education: Graduated from Rogers High School, Rogers, Arkansas, in May, 1952; received Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts from Edinboro State College, Edinboro, Pennsylvania in 1966; received Master of Education degree in English from Edinboro State College, Edinboro, Pennsylvania in 1969; enrolled in Oklahoma State University in September, 1970; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1973.

Professional Experience: Research Assistantship, Office of Medical Education, University of Oklahoma Medical Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1969-70; Teaching Assistantship, Oklahoma State University, 1970-71; Clinical Psychology Traineeships, Levels II and III, Veterans Administration Hospital, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1971-73.